

Rambles of a physician

x x x x x x x x x

“Everywhere have I sought peace
And found it nowhere, save
In a corner with a book.”

DUP.



SPECIMEN PAGES FROM

RAMBLES OF A PHYSICIAN;

OR,

A Midsummer Dream.

BY



A GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Daß mein Ruch, sagt mir mein Ruch,
Noch ganz böse, noch ganz gut.
Kommen drüber arge Fliegen
Bleibt gewiß Gefundes liegen,
Und das Faule findet man;
Kommen aber Bienen dran,
Wird das Faule leicht vermieden,
Und Gefundes abgeschieden.—Logau.

“The painfullest feeling, writes he, is that of your own
feebleness, *Unkraft*: ever as the English Milton says,
‘To be weak is the true misery.’”—*Sartor Resartus*.

*Je veux, que l' on soit homme, et qu'en toute rencontre
Le oeil de notre cœur dans nos discours se montre,
Que ce soit lui qui parle et que nos sentiments,
Ne se masquent jamais sous de vains compliments.*—*Molière*.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.



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IN THE CHURCHYARD OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. PATRICK.

DUBLIN, Dean Swift's Grave, June 20, 1887.

"This Daphne into a laurel tree
Was turned; which is ever green
In token as yet it may be seen
That she shall dwell a maiden still,
And Phoebus failen of his will."—*Confessio Amantis*.

JOHN GOWER.

"Lord William was buried in St Marie's kirk.
Lady Marg'ret in Marie's quire;
Out of the lady's grave grew a bonny red rose,
And out of the knight's a brier."

"And they twa met, and they twa plat,
And fain they wad be near;
And a' the world might ken right weel
They were twa lovers dear."—*The Child of Elie*.

PERCY'S RELIQUES.

A FEW days ago, in Cork, I stood by the neglected grave of Francis Mahony, the "Father Prout," whose "Relics" are the common inheritance of all; and to-day I write in a place equally dear, not so much because of its great church, nor its age, nor its monuments to the Duke of Shomberg, the Earl of Cork, Lady Morgan, Balfe, the first female Mason, and others, but because it contains all that is mortal of the unhappy—the sad, sad pair!—Swift and his Stella. And as I stand here, surrounded by the gloomy memorials of the long dead, and look up at the trembling banners of the Connaught Rangers and their comrades—the tattered relics of many hotly-contested fields—it is not the struggle between uniformed men, who fought in the gaze of an admiring world, and were either victorious, or, in the heat of battle, died, that engages my attention. My thoughts are busy with other things; with the battle that struggled for many years in the souls of three nobles, and after various heart-burnings and bloodless lacerations, and nothing calculated to produce peace, ended at last in defeat. Of course you know the story of the broken-hearted Stella and Venessa and of the "Great Dean,"

who, after all his sorrows and disappointments, "died" at last "in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole;" the man of whom it could be said with more truth than of any other, that he was born crying, lived complaining, and died disappointed.

Jonathan Swift, the greatest satirist and most original writer of his age, was born in Dublin, educated in Kilkenny and at "Trinity," and after residing in England for many years, and keeping the literary and political world in a ferment during the time, ultimately suffered a defeat, by the death of Queen Anne, and was in consequence "retired" as Dean of St. Patrick's, where, with "reluctance and disgust," as he tells us, "he commenced Irishman for Life."

Early in his career Swift was secretary to Sir William Temple, then in the declining years of his statesmanship. "Here, at Moore Park," as Macaulay informs us, "he attended Sir William as amanuensis for his board and twenty pounds a year, dined with the upper servants, wrote bad pindaric odes in honor of his master, spent ten years amid the humiliations of servitude, and made love to a young dark-eyed beauty that waited on Lady Giffard, Sir William's sister, at the same time." This pretty girl was Esther Johnson, Lady Giffard's relative—the "Stella" famous as the inspiration of "Swift's letters." When Temple died his secretary edited his posthumous works, and afterward received from Bishop Berkeley a living at Laracor, in Ireland, and went there to enter upon his duties as a clergyman. Stella followed him, and was accompanied by Mrs. Dingley, a respectable middle-aged woman with a comfortable income. Both lived together in lodgings not far from Swift. When he went away they moved into his parsonage, leaving it for their own rooms on his return.

After his writings had made him famous he went more frequently to London; was a power in the intellectual world; knew intimately the most distinguished men of the day—Pope, Steel, Arbuthnot, Atterbury, Congreve, Gay, Peterborough, Sterne, Bolingbroke, Oxford, Addison, and last, but not least, Addison's sister, "who," he says, "is a sort of wit, like her brother; is married to a French man, Mons. Sartre, prebendary of Westminster, where they have a delicious house and garden." Such as these were his associates.

During his waits in England he wrote regularly to Miss

Johnson, sometimes twice daily, of all that happened in his world, giving particular attention to what he had done himself, calling her "Stella;" and these letters constitute the "Journal to Stella," included in his works. Can you not imagine the poor lady, who had sacrificed everything but honor for the man she loved, longingly waiting for these missives, that brought to her not only the news of the metropolis, but, what was dearer to her than all else, indications, as they certainly must have done, of the homage of a man who was not only "the observed of all observers," but the power behind the throne at the same time. Can you not think of her reading them over and over until she knew them by heart, treasuring their terms of endearment as if they were jewels, repeating them by day and dreaming of them by night, and fretting her life away because of his absence and the uncertainty of her own relation towards him.

This sort of life continues for many years in Ireland; years of self-abnegation on Stella's part, for even in his correspondence he did not always designate her by her first disguise, but often calls her "M. D.;" constantly speaks to her in the third person; and although the letters are apparently exclusively hers, yet writes in the plural, as if he intended to include Mrs. Dingley. He signs himself "Presto," and fills his communications with all sorts of concealed allusions—enough to destroy the peace of mind of a stoic.

While all this was going on, in one of his vacations to London he becomes acquainted with Miss Hester Vanhomrigh, who lived with her mother and sister—ladies of independent fortune. Swift began visiting at their house, when an intimacy sprang up between himself and Miss Hester, who, like Stella, was an accomplished and spirited young lady, capable of appreciating his subtleties and recognizing his mental force; but to think that she would have given him her heart, or permitted him to make her unhappy during the remainder of her days, unless at the beginning he had allowed her to suppose that he loved her and that there was no barrier towards making her his wife, is a belief that requires more credulity than most of us have. However, at this time Stella's letters became less frequent. She complains of neglect, but he does not allude to Miss Vanhomrigh at all, except casually, although

he goes daily to drink coffee with Miss Hester, whom he calls "Hessy" and "Missessy," and thinks that no one ever presided at a coffee table equal to her.

After a year or so of this double dealing he begins to be alarmed at the state of affairs, for Stella is jealous, Hester's mother dies, and she has resolved to go to Ireland! Swift writes to her to the effect that if she should be in Ireland when he is, they will be able to see each other but seldom, for that it is not a place for any freedom; that he will write to her soon, but that it will be always in secret; and that if she writes to him, some one else must direct her letters. In the meantime he has given her a fictitious name, "Vanessa;" himself he calls "Cadenus" and "Cad;" and if this was not sufficient, he adds: "When you are writing anything of especial importance to "Cad," you must not use the name, but four dots, thus:;" and so he continues at this game of hiding, when no one seeks, until the distressed Vanessa wails out, "I trust the last letter I wrote you was obscure enough. I took pains to write it after your manner, although it would have been much easier for me to have written it otherwise."

While Vanessa was kept in this secretive ferment, Stella, from suspense and humiliation, fell seriously ill. It was advised the Dean that the best thing he could do would be to marry her. He at first refused, but afterward consented, on condition that the marriage should be kept secret; and in 1716, in this garden, with Mrs. Dingley as witness, he was legally united to the woman who for sixteen years had devoted to him her life and soul. He seems to have married her from a sense of duty, and on condition that she should only be wife in name. Noble soul! She lingered for twelve years after this, during which time Swift went to England as often as he could. His own house had become a hell to him. It has been conjectured that some physical defect had influenced his loves and his marriage. Anyhow, shortly after his union with Stella one of his many biographers, Delany, having seen him talking with Archbishop King, found the Prelate in tears, and Swift running past with a countenance full of grief. "Sir," said the Archbishop, "you have just met the most unhappy man in the world, but on the subject of his wretchedness you must never ask a question." Do we need to ask? Can we not

imagine that the tear-stained face of poor Vanessa, looking out for him through the lonely shades of Marley Abbey, must have floated beside him like a spectre as he pronounced his vows to Stella in this cheerful garden! And can we suppose any worse cause for wretchedness on his wedding-day than this!

Meanwhile, for seven years more, his visits to Vanessa are continued. She lived not far from here—near Cellbridge. Her old servant pointed out to a visitor, after her death, a group of laurels, trained into a bower, where her writing table and books were placed, and where she always received the Dean when he called. Whenever he came it was her custom to plant a laurel; and so the grove marked the place where she watched and longed for his coming. And, as a gifted woman has recently written, "If, as Boccacio relates, the basil tree grew vigorously and flourished from the head of Isabella's murdered lover, surely these laurels must have drawn their freshness and beauty from the blood of a woman's heart."*

At last, worn out by waiting, Vanessa wrote to Stella, asking what relation she bore to Swift—"Was she his wife?" Stella, evidently stung by the question, enclosed it to her husband. He received it,—started at once for the "laurel grove;" entered, found Vanessa, and, with one of the "dreadful looks" which she said "struck her dumb," threw the crumpled letter before her and went away. She never saw him again. In a few months she died. Stella outlived her rival five years. It has been said, but denied, that at the last she plead to be allowed to die under the roof of the deanery—where she had never lived as his wife—when he strode away with one of the black frowns that smote Vanessa's life, and refused even that last comfort to his dying wife. Can you not imagine his anguish after the death! Can you not see that the spectres by which he was haunted, called into existence by remembrance of the two noble women slowly ruined and murdered by his conduct, must have constantly encompassed him with the horrors that are indicated by his fears, expressed with such pathos and terror, and compelling him to cry out, "It is time for me to have done with the world!" He had long

* Abbey Sage Richardson, in her charming little book, entitled "Old Love Letters," to which I would refer the reader.

felt that reason was deserting him. One day he was observed looking at an elm whose summit was blasted. "I shall be like that tree," he said, "and die first at the top." His memory left him. In his helplessness he had to receive the attentions of others—sometimes with disgust, sometimes with rage. He lived in solitude—disconsolate, gloomy, unable to read. A tumor came on his right eye, so that he is said to have continued a month without sleep, and five men were required to prevent him from tearing out the offending member with his nails. He passed a year without speaking a word, during which time he walked ten hours a day. He became first a maniac; then a drivelling imbecile. One of his last remarks was "I'm a fool." When his will was read, it was found that he had left his entire fortune to build a madhouse.

Do you wonder, therefore, that as I sit here alone near the tomb containing the remains of this pair, that it is not the pomp and pride of life as indicated by the banners, monuments, stained glass, "storied urn and animated bust," that engages my thoughts as I linger, a sympathetic wanderer from beyond the sea, listening to the monotonous drone of the white-haired sexton as he related in ancient-mariner-like notes the following:

"A few weeks since I thought—that perhaps there was water in the Dean's grave. We had the cover removed from the vault; and, sure enough, it was filled to the top. I had it bailed out, and—when we got down to the remains, we found the lid decayed from the coffin of Stella—exposing the upper part of her body. I picked up her head, and—found that it contained seven beautiful white teeth. When we had all the water removed, I put Stella's head in the Dean's coffin, close to his skull, put on the lid, covering both, and—there they remain."

Poor, sad, broken-hearted Stella, thought I, she is at last under the same roof with the Dean.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.—ITALY FROM A STEAM CAR.

* * * * *

A country, apparently, for which modern civilization has done nothing. Farming implements seen on the way are still of the most primitive type, yet graceful. We occasionally encounter teams of white oxen, with Virgilian plows, slowly turning up the soil, and looking as if they had just stepped from the entablature of a temple or the panel of some monument of classic times, and, indeed, this is one of the peculiarities of things material in this glorious atmosphere; they present the clear defined outlines of bas-reliefs, almost of cameos, or else the luminous contrast of light and shadow that you see in the mosaics of Teramo or the pictures of Elton Bray; but oh, the charm of it all! so little of the matter-of-fact, so much suggestive of dreams. Now and then we get glimpses of the dry beds of precipitous cascades running into torrid glens, whose chalky and cream-colored sides are entirely void of vegetation. Occasionally, also, we behold the fragments of defunct temples and the like, projecting into the air from amid squalor and surrounded by desolation. Perhaps it is only a cluster of columns, their sides corroded, capitals gone, around their base, like weeping Marys at the foot of the cross, figures from the vanished pediments, and united at the top by the bent branch of an ilex or the straight stem of a weeping acacia, along which in pendent festoons runs a vine. Behold a picture of Italy—the improvised trellis, the Italy of to-day, the ruined temple, the classic Italy of heroism and song. We encounter everything surprising in landscape—impenetrable ravines, unfathomable chasms, mountains piercing the clouds, dwellings, narrow and high, like light-houses, great rivers dry! with people bleaching clothes on the bottom. In fact, everything exalted, startling, enchanting is here, but the “divine vegetation” you have heard of, and of this, not a vestige visible. * * *

A BRUGES NIGHT.

BRUGES, August 4, 1887.

Fair city, worthy of her ancient fame,
 The season of her splendor is gone by,
 Yet everywhere its monuments remain,
 Temples which rear their stately heads on high;
 Canals that intersect the fertile plain—
 Wide streets and squares, with many a court and hall,
 Spacious and undefaced—but ancient all.—*Pilgrimage to Waterloo.*
 SOUTHEY.

Οὐρα ἐχ Διός ἐστ.—HOMER.

AT five in the afternoon we bade farewell to Brussels for Bruges. A strange ride through a curious land, a country perfectly flat—flat away out until the green and golden landscape melted into a circular line of nebulous grey. But few trees, and they chiefly poplars, long and slender, giving almost no shade, and looking as if they had been the originals of the spires of the churches in the different towns. These in straight lines along the roads, like giant sentinels nodding to their neighbors across the way; no hedges nor fences, no visible division between fields or farms, every inch of which is cultivated—with such a variety of vegetation, too, and all in the finest state. Oats, wheat, Indian corn, barley, potatoes, flax, beans, peas, hops, vetches, turnips, beets—everything, including, of course, the Dutch rose—cabbage. The wheat in *stooks*, with the recently denuded ground already plowed for the next crop; oats in stacks, flax steeped and spread in such artistic designs that the fields look like webs of watered silk. Very few horses, hardly any cows, but many women and men pushing the products of the farm in *barrows* across land—the women, you may be sure, not carrying the smallest loads. Dogs we pass occasionally, dragging in carts not “enough to press a royal navy down,” but yet quantities incredible. Windmills also in abundance, but neither river nor hill, until we are rolled into the handsome station of the famous old town where, in 1436, Philip the Good instituted the Order of the Golden Fleece.

How odd and quaint it is! How dead or dying; and yet who would want to change the aspect of even one of its venerable bricks, or modify the mental vision of its antiquated and sleepy citizens. We are dropped at the door of "*The Hôtel du Commerce*," spacious, stately, and dull—are conducted through flagged halls, up oak stairs (each balustrade being a white swan with a cat-tail in its yellow bill), over rush matting into a fine old chamber, handsome even in decay. When alone I make an inspection of my quarters, and am delighted with all. After a sumptuous meal, a stroll in the clouds of the night through the dusky streets, suggesting the splendor of the Orient, and I am ready for bed. What a charming room!—antique appointments, clawed tables and chairs, wainscotted walls, carved bedstead, with canopy beginning in a small circle at the ceiling, and gradually increasing until it covers it like a pall. But what is that under the clothing that has assumed the configuration of a man? And then the lofty double window, too, how graceful its arrangement, and what a splendid view it presents of an orchard, with trees laden with fruit, running out until lost in the darkness of night. I throw open the window, and in a moment the chamber is filled with the balm of sweet flowers, the odor of apples and new-mown grass—even the stillness subdued, until you can hear the very pulsations of Time—truly a spectre-suggesting place, and I think—in pacing its generous spaces—that in the days of its prosperity, some centuries ago, it must have been the home of one of the old merchants or nobles, whose hands were in the ends of the earth; and if so, what sounds of mirth and revelry have resounded through these once cheerful halls, that just now only gave the ghost of a melancholy echo as my feet walked through its corridors, and ascended its polished oak stairs. Just then a ripple of laughter disturbed the current of my musings. That must be the daughter of the handsome landlady that I noticed at the door as I came in. How fine she looked in her plain rich dress. There,—that mused laugh can only belong to her. Oh, what a jolly old fireplace! big enough for an Elizabethan kitchen's. Well, this is a strange place, and this is certainly a noble saloon, full of the shadows of past greatness, and yet great itself. Hello! here's a lady's work-box! Well, well, I think the circuit of my discoveries is about

completed now, and I had better begin to jot down the occurrences of the day.

There goes the chimes from the "Belfry of Bruges" ringing out the hour of midnight. How musical and stately the *carillon* paces through the still air, playing the requiem of the dying day; and as I sit here alone, surrounded by these great walls and this grotesquely carved furniture that have evidently been the silent witnesses of the deeds of centuries, my mind goes away back to the days of Flemish opulence and pride; and as I try to conjure into existence again the enterprising burghers, noble women and splendid men, who in the long ago won for themselves niches in the Temple of Fame, I am awed by the silence of the sleeping house, and the long procession of venerable worthies that fall into line at memory's call. I can see them now, men with black cloaks, pointed hats and waving feathers, and women in satin, jewels, and rich brocades, as if they had stepped from the canvasses of Rembrandt or Jean Van Eck, and I am alone with the dead.

Just then, as if coming from under the window, I was startled by a light footstep, and a sound as of the rustling of leaves. I listen. Everything is still—the scratching of my pen is all that I have heard. About to begin writing—am startled again by three low, distinct knocks. I observe the bed with the ominous outline. No motion there. I consider the door of the immense closet and listen, but no sound there. I look around; see nothing but the furniture and spectral shadows thrown by my single candle. What could it have been? I certainly "heard a noise." I peer around for something to defend myself in case of an attack. Gazing eagerly into the moonlight I saw the stars and moon, serene and calm. Looking into the mirror, saw the ghastly reflection of my own frightened face; and could not but think for a moment of the contrast between the repose and peace of the lovely night and my agitated feelings. But the tension of my anxiety was soon relaxed by the sound of a musical note, then another; then an almost inaudible thrumming, like a distant harper preparing for flight; then a few gentle strokes, when a male voice, subdued yet resolved, broke out into *Dach's* sweet, sweet song of the Netherlands. The singer used the cooing

language of the original Dutch. I shall hear it forever. Although Longfellow's translation immediately occurred to me—

"Oh, Annie of Tharau, my true love of old,
She is my life, and my goods and my gold ;
Annie of Tharau, her heart once again
To me has surrendered in joy and in pain ;
Annie of Tharau, my riches, my good,
Thou, oh my soul, my flesh and my blood.
Then come the wild weather, come sleet or come snow,
We will stand by each other however it blow."

A pause. *Dio mio!* what an enchanting voice! Lorenzo's words sprang to my lips: "If music be the food of love, play on; give me excess of it, that surfeiting, the appetite may sicken, and so die."

When it continued:

"Oppression and sickness, and sorrow and pain,
Shall be to our true love as links to the chain ;
As the palm tree it standeth, so straight and so tall,
The more the hail beats, and the more the rain falls,
So love in our hearts shall grow mighty and strong,
Through crosses, through sorrows and manifold wrong."

Another pause. "That strain again: it had a dying fall. Oh, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound that breathes upon a bed of violets, stealing and giving odor," when it resumed:

"Should'st thou be torn from me to wander alone
In a desolate land, where the sun is scarce known,
Through forests I'll follow, and where the sea flows,
Through ice and through iron, through armies of foes,
For Annie of Tharau, my life and my sun,
The threads of our two lives are woven in one."

The last line dissolving, beseeching, confiding, appealing.

"With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running.
Untwisting all the chains that tie,
The hidden soul of harmony."

Then a silence that was in itself musical. But who is the young lady's midnight serenader, I thought (for in a mo-

ment I had decided that by some mistake I was occupying her room). What can he be, with such a voice and soul? Just then the stillness was broken by a whiz-z-z, followed by a flying shadow coming down on the window-sill with a sharp click. When, looking out, I saw the hooks of a rope ladder tightening as if by a great weight. Oh, ho! here's a delicate affair. Where shall I go; for you may imagine that I had no notion of being "nurse" to the Juliet whose Romeo just now had awakened the echoes with a tune. My eyes fell again on the mirror on the opposite wall, and there, I saw reflected, on the outside of the curtain, but coming into the room, one of the handsomest faces I ever beheld,—about twenty-two years, but with the spirit, manliness, and daring of a hero of romance. I was embarrassed. How shall I avoid spoiling the plot? He raises himself higher. At the same time a stealthy step in the hall is trying the door! I shall escape into the closet, and remain concealed, I thought, when, more by impulse than deliberation, I enter—pull the door after me—the hall entrance is violently opened from the outside. At the same time I could hear a light, firm foot stepping from the window to the floor—a sudden arrest of motion on the part of both.

There was a few moments of the most awful suspense. It seemed like an eternity. I could hear the beating of three hearts, and I felt that two powerful men had confronted each other and in a rage. At last the silence ended in an altercation—a confused noise—in which I could distinguish such words as "you sought to destroy the honor of my daughter"—"I deny it"—"scoundrel"—"I object"—"we have always loved"—"villian"—"we are married"—"false"—"dishonorable"—then a plunge. They are struggling on the floor; a scuffling, a husky voice calling out, "air, air! You are murdering me." What shall I do? Everything dreadful occurred to me. The possibility of one being slain, the other escaping, and I arrested for the crime. Then the trial—the sentence—execution—all passed through my mind in an instant. But I must save the man that's being killed. When, taking my life in my hands, I attempt to rush to the rescue of the vanquished. But!—he's on his feet again, when, both wrestling across the room, they fall as with the shock of contending giants against the closet door, and I am—awake! and find

myself sitting by the writing table, my pen having just fallen from my hand, the rays of the full-fledged sun filling the room with a flood of light, showing the noble old chamber in its glorious antiquity, the bed with the suspicious outline undisturbed, the music from the belfry breathing "above, about, and underneath"—and all because Shakespeare, Milton, and Longfellow had been in my thoughts, together with Rembrandt, Vandyke, and Rubens, as we rolled through the venerable streets of melancholy Bruges.

GIANT'S CAUSEWAY.

* * * * *

Although there is a disposition all along in the rocks to run into pentagonal cylinders, yet we were greeted with many curious formations varying from these. Among others that of Finn McCool's punch bowl, an abrupt indentation in the precipitous headland, having the foaming sea, in its pyramidal bottom for punch. A distance from the bowl (just far enough for him to be able to keep his watery eye upon it) is the "giant's head," one of the most expressive profiles, chiseled by the hand, or rather the water—of time, that I have seen. An intelligent, smiling, colossal face, looking as if it had just taken a glass of its favorite beverage, and was satisfied; and yet, resembling enough the Duke of Wellington to let you see that ~~we~~ ^{they} were at least countrymen. We were notified of the nearness of the Causeway by such formations as the "giant's marbles," "giant's big toe," and what is of more general interest, the "giant's grandmother," an old woman making the ascent of one of the neighboring peaks, her back bowed in the effort, her shawl drawn over her head and shoulders and held under the chin by her hand, like the natives, as if even the *Künstler* Time, like others great in the craft, took for his models those nearest at hand. The giant pedestrian of the rocks is also credited with an organ, whose stony ribs still suggest the instrument invented by St. Cecelia—these, in connection with the "wishing chair," presided over by a brace of old crones, make a *tout ensemble* interesting enough. As we approached the brooding beauties on the chair, they got up, and insisted on "the gentlemen sitting down to wish for their sweethearts, or whatever they pleased." "Johnny: Why don't you wish for something good for yourselves?" "I do. I *wish* you would buy this pig," was the reply. "It's carved out of genuine, solid bog-oak. It's the Irish canary that pays the rint."

This, about the canaries, is the regulation joke among these venders all over the island. You first hear it when they board the ship in Queenstown harbor, and think it funny; when it



"CANARDS"

"Hush! I'm going to Cork, but *they* think it's Killarney —"

is repeated in every public resort, you think it is not; yet all the same you hear it everywhere—in your dreams and when awake, when you enter churches and when you come out. It's a joke as frequent in the air of Ireland as salmon is, on the tables of Dublin and Cork. In Cork when a baby is born, friends are treated to whiskey and salmon; when it is christened, salmon again; when it is married, they throw a can of pickled salmon after it instead of a slipper; when it dies, they have salmon at the wake; and when it is buried, to keep off the evil spirits, they put a salt salmon in the coffin. And so with the "witticism" about the Irish canary—before you land you hear it; it is repeated when you come ashore; it is re-echoed at the lakes of Killarney and in the Gap of Dunloe, on the top of the highest mountain, and in the deepest valley, and by the sea—everywhere. Like the phantom voice in the ear of the guilty Macbeth, it is forever wailing out "sleep no more," until the number of people, I really believe, driven out of Ireland by this "joke" is greater than the number of snakes banished by St. Patrick. And the plague of it is that even when you are embarking, an involuntary exile from Erin, with your fingers in your ears, and crazed, they shout after you from the beach: "Don't you want to buy a dead pig, carved from genuine live oak. It's the Irish canary, sir, that pays the rint." * * *

THE LAST OF LUCY.

DRESDEN GALLERY, August 31, 1887.

"She was a phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight;
 A lovely apparition sent
 To be a moment's ornament."

WORDSWORTH.

"—garrit aniles
 Ex re fabellas."

HORACE.

"All great art is praise, the expression of man's delight in God's work,
 and cannot coexist with smoke, noise, and mechanism."—RUSKIN.

"THE mountains gently slope towards the Alps" I perceive as I wend my pictorial way again towards the "Sistine Madonna:"* not that I mean to imply that there is any descent from Hans Holbein's masterpiece, at one end of this magnificent collection, to Raphael's at the other. They are both Pisgahs of supreme delight, from which the faithful may get glorious glimpses of the promised land—Holbein's perhaps the highest, anyhow, the most beautifully varied, as *it* represents both earth and heaven; or rather, as Socrates was said to have brought philosophy from the gods to dwell among men, so the sturdy Augsburg^{er} has translated *heaven* into a German home, and shows you, with an eloquence beyond words, that they are synonymous, while with Raphael's it is *only* heaven; a heaven glorious, to be sure, yet beyond reach.

Yesterday I walked down the flowery descent to the beautiful plain, spread with earthly delights, that separates the two bergs—"The pearls of the Dresden gallery"—and to-day I am again in the "Happy Valley," yet, unlike Rasselas, content with what I feel and see, though perhaps only so, because I know that I can cross the mountains when I please. I sit here for a little while, metaphorically, under the trees, on a smooth stone by a murmuring stream, to tell you of a story related by one of the scenes on the opposite side, not so

* Holbein's Madonna is looked into in the preceding letter.



The Meyer Madonna.—HOLBEIN.

much because it is depicted in a grand manner, as because of the interest of the incident itself, to which it gives a local habitation and a name. The artist is Fran. Ubertino, and the tale that his picture relates is about as follows :

Three claimants for the throne of a dead king have brought a land into a state of alarm ; which is the legitimate heir, no one can decide. In consequence, the country is in dissension and strife ; even the wisest cannot agree. The throne-demanding, doubt-exciting three are arrested, tried, and, as disturbers of the peace, sentenced each, on pain of death, to shoot an arrow through the heart of the deceased monarch, who for the purpose is exhumed and suspended from the branch of a tree. The first takes aim, bends his bow, and whiz went the shaft through the body of the king. The second did likewise, and with equally correct aim. The third raises the weapon, aims irresolutely into the air, but, instead of shooting, lets bow and arrow fall to the ground, when, turning around and addressing the judges, he says : " No ; rather than mutilate the remains of my already insulted father, I shall die ! " " You are the rightful heir—you are the legitimate son ! "—cry the enraptured judges, and the admiring multitude shout, " Long live the King, and may his counsellors be ever so wise ! " " An appropriate companion for 'The Judgment of Solomon.' " I can hear you say ; and so say I.

The pictures most sought after here, instead of being suspended from cords are fixed on hinges like doors, are covered with glass, and can be moved at pleasure. The gallery at present contains many persons, mostly ladies, nearly all Germans, English, and French, copying the most celebrated specimens, which are unhinged by the attendants, and placed near windows, at a height to suit the copyist's eyes. Many of these deft workers remind me of Hawthorn's Miriam. I look in vain for Donatello her faun. To my surprise the copies usually are hardly to be distinguished from the originals, except by a freshness, and sometimes a glow which the originals, with the exception of the German masters, no longer possess. Why this more than correctness of imitation, I ask, and learn that it is due both to skill and to the fact that the same persons sometimes continue for years, like Monks with manuscripts, reproducing the same masterpieces until they could

almost do it, you would imagine, with closed eyes. And, "by the way," says my genial respondent, who, like most of the official of the German galleries, is a man of unbounded knowledge, much penetration, and polished suavity of manners withal, by the way, there is a world of romance and self-abnegation hid behind the pallid faces of many of the speechless people that you see here and there, so industriously transcribing the pictures most in demand; men and women, some of them that, instead of reflecting the thoughts of others, would express their own, but that the needs of dependants obliges them to do what pays best, and thus, with souls full of glorious things struggling for light, they continue, day after day, copying the *creations*, or rather the *creation*, of others, as some of them never extend the field of their exploits beyond one picture, which they copy year after year. "You have observed the little lady in black, over yonder under the shadow of Palma's Cross?" "Yes, sir." "Well, she's an Italian countess—as accomplished as she is deformed. While a young lady, she attempted to catch a child falling from a fourth story, with the result that is so painfully evident, and yet she, with the brilliancy of a De Staël and gracefull inventiveness of a Kaufman, copies constantly—only one picture too—supports the dignity of her family in Rome by her brush alone. *Her* Madonna (the Madonna of the Grand Duke), thus feeds the hungry and clothes the naked every day, for she has been reproducing it constantly for the past ten years, her revenue increasing with her skill. Then, again, the little Frenchman over there, duplicating the bestialities of Rubens. There he is—standing on a chair behind the easel, shampooing the bald head of his one hundred and twenty-sixth Silenus! You wonder how he can do such bad (*unsittlich*) work so deliberately; yet last week he celebrated the completion of his one hundred and twenty-fifth transcription of that same picture, is going on with another, and has orders ahead for seven more. Strange—that notwithstanding the fact that he has been contemplating Silenus and his peony-cheeked crew, for months, uninterruptedly, yet in his heart he is anything but a disciple of St. Grobianus. His mind is *not* colored to the thing it works in like the dyers hand." "Who are the pleasantest people that come here to copy," I ask? "They all have their

peculiarities. The people who paint saints are usually morose and taciturn. The madonnists, sanguine and skeptical. The affectors of the nude—great sticklers for truth—irritable and hard to manage—due, I think, to their *Verité's* lying so scandalously. While the landscapeists are pleasantest, because they are always pleased. I like the landscapeists best. Some of them have been coming here for years: but—please excuse me: I must go and hang Diana," and he crossed over to assist a young lady, shifting that fleet huntress from an easel to her position on the wall, near her former victims "the Children of Niobe," while I resume writing and reflecting: for it seems strange, and a pity, too, to see people, expert in the technique of their craft, and not without invention, either, growing gray and beautiful copying the faded landscapes of others. It may be the placid beauty of the aerial Cland, or the tempest torn mountains of a Salvator Rosa, while the everlasting hills, decked up in living green, cloud-cleaving mountains, fantastic rocks, beautiful trees, flowers and hills that encircle Dresden like a nimbus of porphyry and gold, are passed by, for I have not seen a native landscape since entering the gallery, and yet the country around is called "The Saxony Alps." * * * I have been sitting for some time, now, before the Sistine Madonna, which occupies a good-sized room by itself, a room lighted by a side window—not a good light. The only other object of interest in the apartment, except the bust of the author—whom do you suppose? My Rebecca, from Ann Hathaway's Well! Is it not strange? She sits on the sofa beside me, has been quietly talking German with a handsome old lady whom she calls aunt. She has laid down on the seat, where I can read the title, Schlegel's "Noten von Raphael und Palma Vecchio," and yet, so absorbed by the reverence and wonder-inspiring Madonna, she has not seen me. The same *abandon* and interfusion of self into every object she contemplates, the same faculty of seeing things beyond ordinary sight, observed at our first and every subsequent meeting, is still evident.

From the moment of entering she has been constantly speaking in a half audible voice about the picture, which truly fills the apartment with a divine, palpable glory unlike anything I have ever felt. How can she talk so freely in

presence of the Queen of Heaven? The queen who needs no *crown*, whose patents of royalty are expressed in her heavenly face and in the cherubic halo around. She has just told her aunt that when the picture was brought into Germany the king ordered it to be stood in the throne room, that he might admire it again himself, and show it to his friends before it got to its destination in Dresden. The only light suitable for it was on the spot where stood the throne, when he shouted out "Push it away and make room for the great Raphael." Now she is saying that she comes here every day, and yet cannot decide between this picture and Holbein's, but that if she was a Roman Catholic she would feel as if she could talk to Holbein's Madonna, the same as if she were her mother, but that if she communicated with Raphael's at all, it could only be by proxy, she would have to say "dear St. Barbara, or St. Sixtus, or you pretty angel children won't you please tell Jesus to ask His gracious mother to make me better"—this uttered like a soliloquy, ending in profound silence—when, stretching forth her tightly-clasped hands with an artless candor, as if thinking aloud, and gazing into the picture, she continued, audibly: "Consecrate me afresh, O Holy Child Jesus! Make me as merciful as Mary, that I may love *all* little children—the ragged and dirty and poor—everybody loves the pretty and clean—teach me—that I may love *all* mankind." * * * She has been quiet for some time now, also, her very calm aunt; their thoughts evidently projected behind the veil. The room so still that I am afraid to disturb their meditations by even the scratching of my pen. Her aunt violates the silence. "The Italians' heaven is in the *clouds*. The Germans' at *home*. Where is yours, my Lucy?" The old lady speaks very *careful* German. Lucy replies "Both and everywhere, for the mind is its own place, and of itself can make an earth of heaven, a heaven of earth." "Who says that, dear, Schlegel?" "No; don't you know? Milton—Paradise Lost." "But paradise is not lost, my dear." (Here the merest apology of a smile showed that she was conscious of the inappropriateness of the pun.) "Paradise is regained. We are the Argonauts that have gone out in quest of only the golden fleece, and in its stead have found the *Verlorene*



The Sistine or Dresden Madonna.—RAPHAEL.

Paradies,' and there it is. Can't you see the heavenly host? Can you not hear the fluttering of angels' wings? The air is filled with hosannas; the redeemed, the glorified, and the good are on their knees, and even the very cherubs of heaven are enraptured by the heart-thrilling scene." "But, my dear aunt, are there *clouds* in heaven?" "Certainly not, my child. The curtain separating the clouds from the celestial place has been but for a moment drawn aside, and the glorious Königin has graciously condescended to appear for an instant, that the earth may know of the heaven beyond. I am surprised with delight every time I see her, when I think she so generously remains there so long, as if she wanted the whole world to come unto Him that she holds in her arms, that by and through Him they may enter into the joys of the Lord. She is *worthy* of all praise, but *desires* it not." After a long pause, in which they seem again to be absorbed—lost in an attempt to fathom the beyond of which this is but the vestibule. So abstracted are they with what they see that they never seem to think of the beautiful anachronism of representing the *infant* Jesus in heaven. Lucy this time interrupts the stillness only disturbed by my pen, by replying, "And yet this picture is not so great as the Madonna with the three children in Berlin. There the painter has expressed more, with less." "Yes, to you, my dear, because you can see through and through, but for the great multitude, the Dresden Madonna will, perhaps, be forever recognized as the highest attainment of Christian art." Another pause, and she whispered, "Let us go and see Holbein, now." She picked up her book by my side and she and her aunt passed out without being conscious of there being another person in the room. I can not follow her, for I am under a spell, and the heavenly vision keeps me where I am. But shall I never see *her* again? asks my soul. And the dismal death knell tolls out, "Never, forever! Never, forever."

IN A GONDOLA.—VENITIAN NÄIVETÄ.

The Venitians, taking them all together, are an odd lot, a combination of art and nature strangely unique. Besides their personal peculiarities, there are also social differences in Venice, noticeable even to the casual observer as well as the visitor of a day, that are striking enough. The unexpected things, for example, pitched through windows into the all-devouring sea, sometimes drenching the too curious traveller, are wont to come upon a man as a rather unpleasant surprise; even the graceful alabaster-rimmed casements of arcaded and balconied fronts not always abstaining from emitting these golden showers; then, the ingenuous sights of the side canals, where art conceals nothing, and where men and women are evidently much lower than the angels and nearly as nude, as well as the flesh-crawling sights frequent in the sunless lanes and weed-grown courts of the Venice of Faliero, Foscarei and Henry Dandolo are only another illustration of the fact that even the best, and largest slice of bread has a crust; but when you get into the open spaces, vistas of translucent loveliness, oh! the glory, the divine harmony, the enchantment of it all, as if a section from some celestial city had floated down from its azure foundation and had rested here for a while, as a foretaste of the mansional magnificence reserved for the blessed. It's a dream, and you dread the waking, when all will have faded into invisibility. The miracles of marble gracefulness, springing like Venus from a placid ocean, pillars of crested sea foam jutting into the air, arrested by petrification before reaching the sky; a city of alabaster and emerald, marble, amethyst, and gold, with the broad bosom of its undulating streets as silent as light. You have seen the pictures of Canaletto and you imagine you know Venice. You have beheld glimpses of the splendor of Venitian sea, architecture, and sky, interluded in some of the compositions of Titian. You know of T. Moran's and Clara Montalba's masterpieces, and others by our own people, and familiarity has taught you to admire English Turner, the greatest of them all,

and you may have read Ruskin, and then, you imagine you know of the aerial and fantastic splendors of the inimitable, but in vain; there is no power in print or paint to transmit its glory. It must be seen. It was yesterday evening after gliding in a gondola past such visions as the above, whether in the body or out of it, I know not, that young Herman, the divinity student and myself ran ashore and jumped on the beach of a rather secluded lagoon. After strolling for some time, like children in wonderland, chewing the cud of sweet, and dreamy fancy, we drifted into the mouth of a little bay—the sights it exhibited instantly brought us back to stern reality. Our first impulse was to retire; curiosity induced us to remain a moment, but when we saw that the place, although retired, was not private, we walked boldly down and found a goodly number of men and women bathing at the same time, and as naked as Adam before the fall, and such wretched specimens of humanity too, like men, as somebody in Shakespeare says, “You would pare from turnips on a summer’s day,” Falstaff’s “forked radishes” Hyperions to them. The women, like Chinese grotesques, carved in ivory. “If I looked no better than they,” said Herman, who has an eye for the picturesque, “I would never take a—bath,—would be ashamed even of my shadow on the wall.” Truly you wonder, after such an unexpected exhibition, where Venetian artists get their models. You also appreciate the kindness of the better class of bathers, in wearing clothes. On the way back, Herman, disgusted with the present went into ecstasies over the past, that from such inadequate material created the human splendors of Tintoretto, Titian, and Paul Veronese—the divinity student, more conservative as well as more reserved, said not a word.

SYNOPSIS.

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